

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR ENABLING SIMULTANEOUS MULTI-USER ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT EDITING

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

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A document management system and method are provided to support simultaneous multi-user editing of a single document. The system and method do not require the use of a new file format or the use of a central document repository to limit user access to the document. When a user attempts to open the document and a determination is made that the document is in use, then an alert is presented to the user that informs the user that the document is locked for editing. The user may select to receive a notification when the original document is no longer in use. If the user selects to make a local copy and subsequently merge the changes, the local copy will be made and the path of the original document will be stored so that the original document location can be determined at the time that the changes are merged. When the original document becomes available, the user's changes can be merged into the original document. The original document is located using the original path that was stored when the local copy was created. Of course, any time that a merge is attempted, and a conflict exists (i.e., the changes in the local document are inconsistent with the changes made to the original document), an alert can be generated to inform the user of the conflict and the user can be prompted to reconcile the conflict to complete the merge.

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